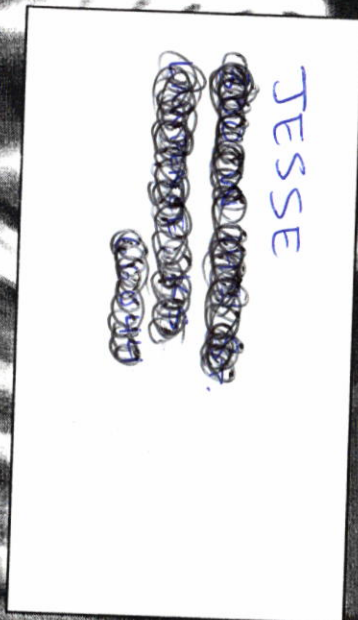


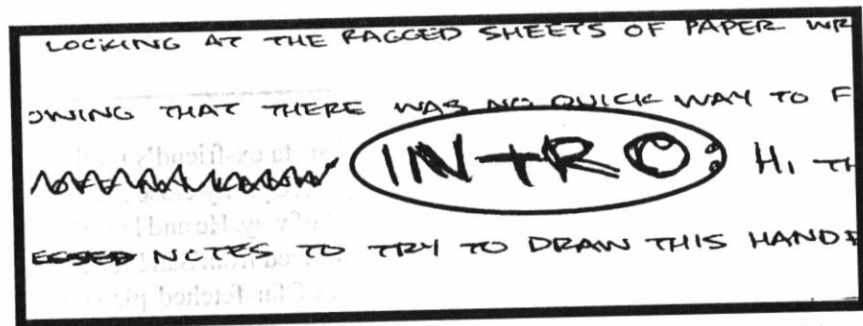
43 s sherman  
denver, co  
80209



★ GONE ★  
★ AWAY ★







hi there. just a few quick notes and whatnot to attempt to draw this collection of thoughts into a amorphous blob because a cohesive whole is probably asking too much. this really isn't much more than a collection of things that go bump in my head at night. whether they're worth sharing is up to you.

this was assembled entirely on computers (windows, macintosh, and even my cute little linux box with the 14" monitor that randomly turns a sickly green) so there to all you neo luddites who think computers are bad.

i wrote, drew, and assembled everything. no particular copyright on anything. take what you will. take what you can.

as always - get in touch if anything in here makes you feel like it. good, bad, whatever. that's the only reason that anyone does this stuff - attempted communication.



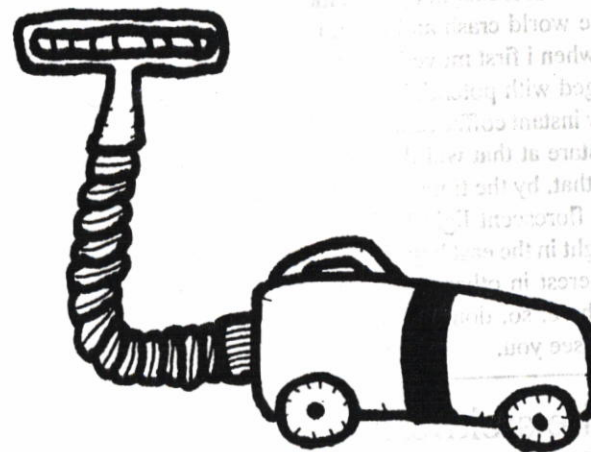
brian of  
43 s sherman  
denver, co 80209  
brianof@linuxstart.com  
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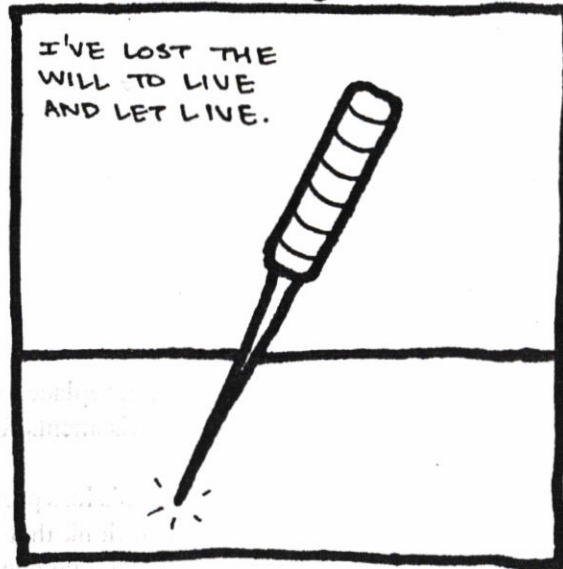
i had a dream once that all the bus ads had been replaced with photos from concentration camps. they were all advertisements for lysol.

the funniest part about being busted by the kinko's loss prevention guy was his constantly repeated question - do you think that it's right to give things away that don't belong to you? i think he even asked it a couple of times after he called the cops. incidentally, kinko's now has a toll free number for workers to rat each other out. sometimes it's not what you say, but how you say it.

when i was about fourteen i drew a giant skull on the back of my friend steve's army jacket. it looked exactly like a light bulb with black eyes stuck on it. i will never draw anything that cool again. incidentally steve is a pot dealer a couple towns away now.



## A SIMPLE CASE



the damage caused by spending all of my extra hours by myself is all too evident. there are days when i might speak twenty words in an entire day and those mainly fall into the "excuse me thanks you too" category of filling the awkward silences with cautious monosyllables which are just annunciated grunts really. i feel the silence creeping in all the time. people have important agendas, things to buy, appointments to keep. i move through them on my way to work and they do the same right back to me. the world seems shut up and frozen. i wonder whatever happened to me. i can't remember exactly when the garbage started to stink or when my hair started falling out but it caught up with me somewhere. where did my concept of the world crash and burn. i think about how i saw things years ago when i first moved to san francisco. everything was kinetically charged with potential. i could just sit on my back porch drinking shitty instant coffee (couldn't even afford a coffee maker at the time) and stare at that weird, omniovercast sky. somehow i was content with that. by the time i moved away i just thought of the sky as one giant florescent light bulb that made the hangover worse and the sunlight in the east bay always hurt my eyes. i don't know where the disinterest in other people came from but i don't think it's going anywhere. so, don't take it personally if i don't say "hi" the first time i see you.

the sickness has it's appeal.

## FINK!



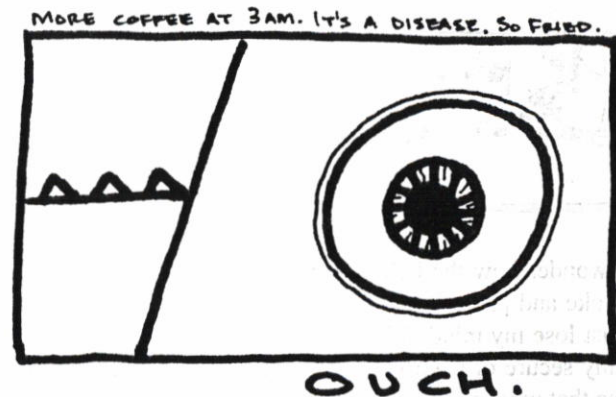
Found out that an old and sorta ex-friend's mother had died sometime last week. They were pretty close in the usual guilt ridden american family sort of way. He and I used to be pretty close as well. We actually moved from San Francisco to Denver together with all sorts of far-fetched plans and impossible ideas that were chatterworthy enough to keep us up until sunrise on a regular basis. We played music together and live in the same apartment. Some where along the way things went sour. Time went on as he sat in his room watching television and I had my own things going on. Even now, nearly a year after I helped him load all of his crap into a uhaul pointed back in the direction of California, I really don't know what exactly went wrong between us but it was enough to make our apartment a quiet and tense place for the better part of three months. Maybe I got pissed because I thought he was wasting his time with nothing creative (even though he thought of himself as an artist) or constructive going on in his life. So I heard about his mother's death third hand and I really should call. I should at least shoot off a letter. Fuck. I don't want to call. There is just something about calling a person you haven't spoken to in almost a year that fucks with me. The idea of being the sympathetic yet distant old sorta ex-friend mumbling a bunch of inarticulate platitudes about the wheel of death and birth just grates on me. As if that isn't bad enough in itself it would have to be over the telephone. My old, sorta ex-friend's mother just died and I don't want any part in it. What is wrong with me? I have a rational explanation for nearly everything and this is one situation that I can't just pare down to a few neuroses and forget about. I'm making excuses and backpeddling which is something that I despise in other people. The disconnection that I'm always upset about between other people has crept into my own life or at least into my perception. I pick up the phone and hang it up again. I am a fink.ok. so i wrote a letter eventually.

i can be a bad person.





computers. a glorified switchbox that seems to get everyone all worked up over one facet of it or another. most folks have strong opinions about computers one way or another and they don't seem to be based on anything that makes any sense to me. i think that one of the reasons that people with computers have the tendency to shoot their mouths off without really having anything to say is that when the question is reduced to machines and functions most people don't know much of anything about computers. opinions are based on the most arbitrary parts of a computer. the most obvious of these are operating systems and on the surface it might seem like some kind of conflict between the hatfields and mccoys because the conviction that we're #1 runs deep with both factions. windows and macintosh. old rivals. shirts and skins. most of what end users think they know about either company's product is a carefully constructed public relations facade. are you more of an individual if you buy a macintosh? are you the stable and nose to the grindstone type if you use windows? don't be stupid. granted, there are a whole bunch of other options out there but most of them don't have enough pretty pictures or things to click on for the end user consumer to think that they are getting something for their money. i bailed out of the hamster wheel. my computer doesn't run either mac os or windows, though it could if i bothered to install either one. i used to be a mac obsessed goofball swearing that it was the best os in the face of glaring fact. like most zealots, i'd stopped really thinking about the tools i used and was drawn into the meaningless world of corporate tastemaking. completely stupid but easy enough to start - someone else is saying that your computer sucks and the snowballs start flying. playground logic. anyway, i'm sorta done with that. there are other childish arguments for me to waste my time with. i run linux. linux is the smart ass punk rock kid of the computer world. if you know how to properly assemble it (i don't) linux can be downloaded for free from a whole bunch of different places or you can buy it on a cd rom for next to nothing (i've seen it for \$1.89.) the linux community is more like a band of anarchist coders and techies spread out all over the world than some concentrated attempt by a company at consuming market share. almost no one who works on developing linux gets any sort of monetary compensation (though this is changing too.) i've had both love and hate affairs with linux. i love the fact that it never crashes but hate the fact that i have to write my own driver to use a zip drive. in ways switching to linux is like changing to doing everything the hard way but for a reason. i know so much more about how computers actually function in just a few months of using linux than i learned in ten years of using macs. being largely deprived of an object oriented metaphor for dealing with the contents of my computer i've had to learn a lot more about how it functions internally and now that i'm past the first steep hill of the learning curve i'm much less enthusiastic about the hermetically sealed world of commercial computer systems. i think the fact that most people who consider themselves computer literate don't know how their computers actually work (and i'm not talking about diodes and chips) is indicative of a much larger problem. people are largely disconnected from the things that they depend on daily and in some cases consider knowing details about the inner workings of the things they use to be beneath them. how many yuppie types with a college education and a few decorative wood working tools in their garage actually know how to fix the toilet when it breaks or would even bother to open up the tank to try to figure it out? this kind of thinking drives me crazy because it really is the dawn of an age where no one knowing how to take care of themselves is an eventuality. yeah. it's a stretch right now but i see it creeping into my own life all the time. check out some of the things that you throw away that you could fix or reuse with a little knowledge and you might see what i mean. for myself i try to figure out how as many things work as i possibly can. getting your hands dirty isn't something bad. **learning isn't just about theory.**

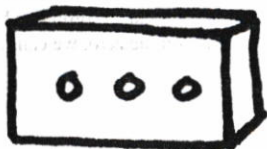


waking up twenty minutes after my alarm started going off is just fucked. npr just isn't waking me up anymore. if anything the stories they're talking about (in the expected fakehappy wax head radio announcer tones) are just incorporated in disturbing ways into the dreams that i'm already having. it's just great to wake up wondering if my sleepy ears are just distorting everything or if there really are bombs raining over eastern europe. just add some coffee and you have a whole head full of frightening visions of attempted mind control. just imagine that - we're fed poison by our radio alarm clocks every morning in that foggy transition between sleep and the slightly more lucid awareness that comes right after it. of course, that line of thinking about subliminal messages leads to worrying about the compounded effect when combined with the direct, hands all the way on the table aural lobotomy that is the howard stern show or, god forbid, rush limbaugh. more rootless paranoia. damn this first cup of coffee. my nervous system just isn't ready for this kind of kickstart. maybe i should just drug myself with some exotic narcotic every night so that at least there will be some kind of plausible explanation for all of these pesky visions of apocalypse that leak into my morning routine. luckily i have the usual "express to insanity and physical injury" bus ride to wash away all this mindsnot and replace it with sincere fear for life and limb. the tweed clad buttocks of urban economy stuck in my face doesn't help much either. my bus is definitely a winner. like the 22 fillmore that i spent so much time on in san francisco, the 0 broadway bus is like a necrotized pinata ready to disgorge it's insane collection of human flotsam at any given street corner. the zero is another unanticipated oil and water mixture of contrasting mental states because it cuts a strange path through so many different neighborhoods. it cuts right through the hierarchy of urban demographics and neighborhood planning. it roars through residential areas, twists through the half assed collection of trendy eateries and skyscrapers that we call downtown and terminates in lodo (an acronym of sorts for 'lower downtown') where everything is totally shot to hell in a hard rock cafe sort of way. every trip on this bus is a low level adventure. the ride is always a ride. there is one guy who sleeps in the backseat every morning. he must shoot himself with a tranquilizer dart before boarding.. on the other side of that same coin is the bus driver who must be out of his skull on adrenaline and crack enhanced bus depot coffee. he takes corners and makes stops like some bizarro world evel knievel hell bent on delivering his passengers shaken, not stirred. i have this horrible premonition once in awhile that the bus will pull up to my stop and the driver will be wearing a crash helmet and a racing harness. i don't think i'll bother asking for a transfer. the other bus i take is like a kiddie ride or something in comparison to the white knuckled public transit disaster we affectionately call the zero. don't get me started about the dream i had that richard nixon was driving the it. if someone were to overhear i'd probably be committed. so, if you're ever in denver take a ride on over to my house on the zero. we can have coffee on the porch while the shock wears off.



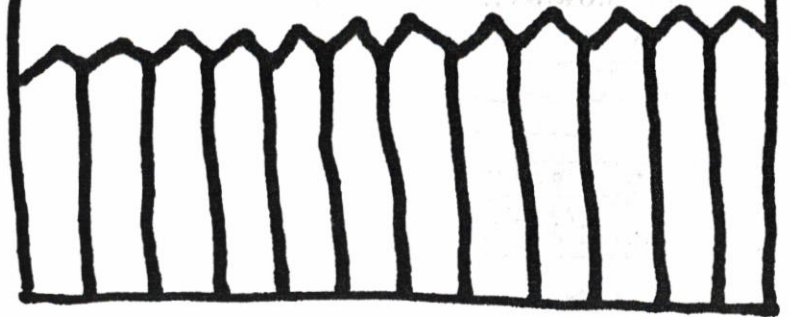
# BROKE

i really wonder how the hell i ever made it through those dark days of being broke and pathetic. thinking back on it i'm pretty surprised that i didn't just lose my mind. this isn't to say that i've ever really been that financially secure or even further ahead than the paycheck to paycheck existence that most people seem to slog through. when it comes down to the reality of measuring out days in packages of ramen my foundations start to get a little crumbly. i don't much miss the days when i would walk for almost an hour to avoid taking the bus and save 75 cents. i don't miss being a little to moderately sick all the time because i couldn't really afford to take the amount of insulin that i needed to stay healthy. when everything gets shitty you make yourself nervous-sick scheming and scamming just to keep the essentials of survival in front of you. times stretches out like melting taffy as you ponder the fact that you have no one to call collect and plead with for sympathy or a couple of loose bucks. the feeling of trading your pennies in for change you can actually use is a grim one. in this odd sort of suspended animation there is nothing to do but wait around for that final, pathetic \$30 paycheck to hit the mailbox. then it's time to think about the legal ramifications of adding a digit or two to that atm deposit and waiting for a conga line of jackbooted bank gestapo to streaming from behind the glass door and beat you to death right there in the corporate plaza. there is just no way to relate to other people when you sound like a broken record and grind down every sympathetic ear with the same old story as the last time they talked to you. i remember wishing that i could sleep for a week and wake up when some more money rolled in so i could buy some more peanut butter and bread. if i search through all the dirty laundry that i don't have any money to was maybe i'll find some change. all luck is accounted for. all resources are so overextended that a delicate surface tension forms that makes every decision critical. with two months worth of rent to pay and no money coming in for at least twelve more days there is very little margin for error. **this is not living.**

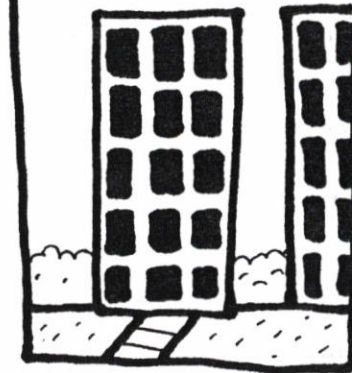


this brick looks edible.

I PUT A BIG FENCE AROUND MY BACKYARD.  
THOSE FUCKERS WERE ALWAYS TRYING TO LOOK IN.

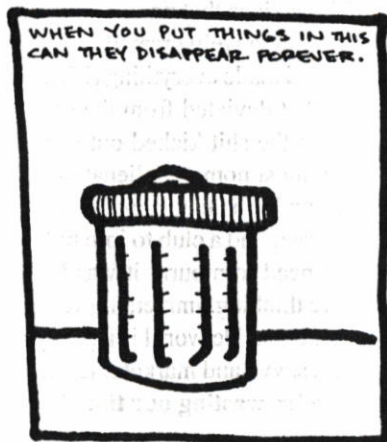
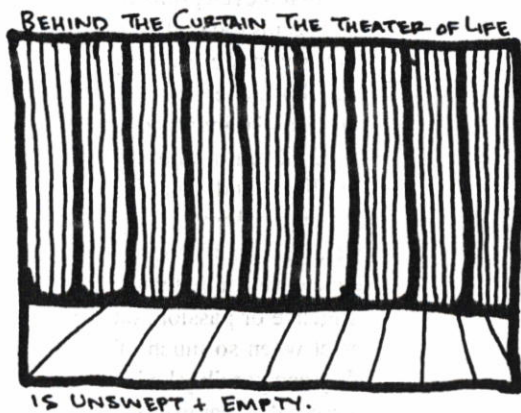
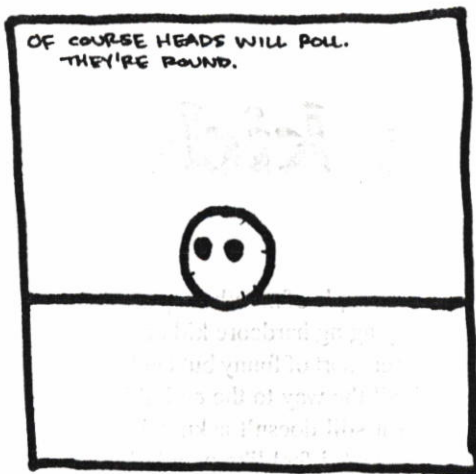


HELL DIDN'T EXIST UNTIL WE BUILT IT.



NEVER ENOUGH TIME  
OR FREE HANDS.

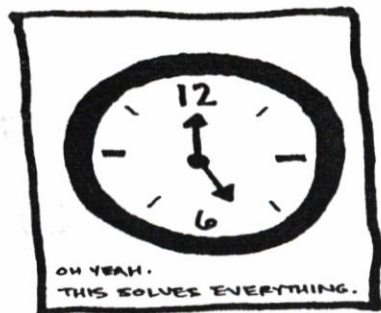




*for a good time...  
... walk in*

yoona and i ate at this kinda yuppie restaurant (they have pretty good gardenburgers and free refills on soda if that makes me seem like any less of a scumbag) near my house a while back. it was a pretty typical sunday afternoon scene - the bar lined with youngish folks drinking whatever microbrew happens to be cool right now and watching a football game with the sound turned off. kinda nice but kinda sickening at the same time. anyway, after flagrant abuse of the free refill policy (made even more flagrant by the fact that the waitresses have to bring you your refills) it was time for a visit to the bathroom. A middle aged guy wearing a sports coat tried to follow me into the bathroom which seemed odd since it's a total single seater with only a sink for the potential co-pilot. figuring that this guy had a few years on me i just assumed that this guy had a biological imperative for hitting the can before i did. trying to be polite (poser), i said "oh, go ahead," which apparently embarrassed him because he said "no, i'm ok." i shrugged my shoulders and went into the bathroom being careful to lock the door behind me lest i be overtaken by more old men looking for somewhere to lay down a couple of quick lines or whatever. well, i was still laughing by the time i got back to my table. i had glanced up midstream to see "free head. every day at 4pm" written on the wall and i didn't even need to look at my watch to know what time it was. i wonder how many other people have done the same thing either here or at a gazillion other public restrooms. advice to the horny: try using bathrooms with more than one toilet. it just makes more sense.





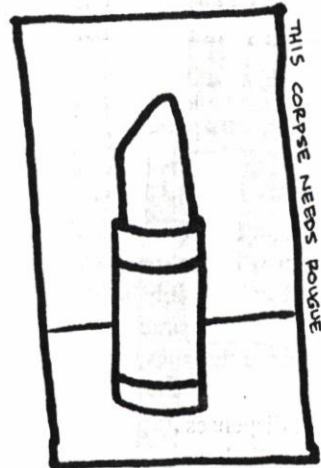
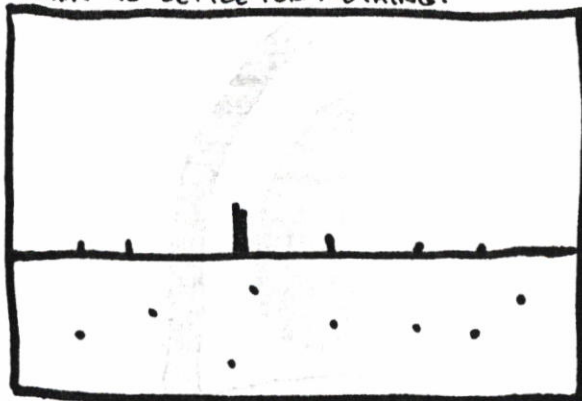
the way i am about time you'd think i was some kind of egomaniacal artist who created grandiose masterpieces instead of some scribbler who draws a lot of crooked boxes. hopefully no one who really knows me thinks i'm a total egomaniac. i don't really understand how this particular insanity works but i look at the people i know and interact with and i cannot figure out how they manage to have so much free time. is there something terribly wrong with the way that i manage my time? i always feel an invisible hand pushing on the fast forward button and when i look at the clock it always seems to be about five hours away from the next time that i have to get up. how often do i see quoted statistics about how much time the average american spends in front of the television every day and i'm always awed by it. i fight with bared teeth for scraps of time to half ass at exhausted attempts at things that i love while so many other people bathe in the blue green glow of a half dozen sitcoms a day with nary a sign of struggle. is the matted hair and blood underneath their fingernails just invisible to me? maybe it's all the coffee? i would kill for a few extra hours in the day - to sleep less, get more done in fewer hours, etc. maybe kill is too drastic. being cranked up nearly all the time on industrial strength coffee and endless two liter bottles of diet cola is pretty fatalistic. that's not enough though. i want to steal time. i want to steal hours from people who don't use them. i want to seize all the leisure time from all the trust fund babies who spend it all being bored or lapsing into existential crisis. i want all those quiet hours retired old men use up monitoring the weather in fifteen states. you think i'm joking. go ahead. kill hours in aol chat rooms. whittle away hours talking about colored vinyl. i'm coming for you.

## *it's over, kids.*

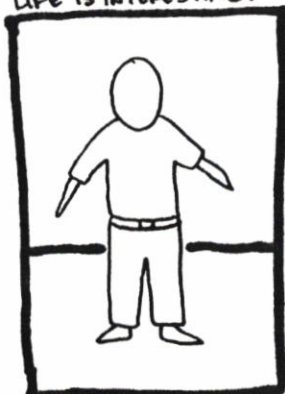
for what seems like the hundredth time in the past couple of months i open another zine to read another tirade by yet another rapidly aging hardcore kid bemoaning the state of hardcore. i used to think these rants were sort of funny but lately i have trouble managing the patience to read through all the way to the end. this latest tirade is actually more articulate than most but it still doesn't acknowledge the most central problem with this particular argument. i feel like people lean too heavily on hardcore (meaning a group of people - i'm not even going to try to use the word "community" because in this context it just seems too pretentious and, of course, we all know what a crock it is) and expect way more from it personally than you can reasonably expect a bunch of kids who make music and related product and attend shows to commit to. the emptiness and mindless consumerism that is so often decried has always been there in one form or another. from the beginning things have been unstable - from the earliest bands jumping to major labels and arena tours to people spending more time at shows shopping distro tables than watching bands or interacting with each other. punk rock got hit with big piles of money wielded by suburban kids who have way more talent for nosing out the future of cool than they have either intelligence or passion. on the other side of it, what kind of effect do you really expect when so much effort is expended making sure that records are as cheap as they can possibly be instead of all the other problems that could be potentially addressed. it all came down to supply and demand though. people were just so damn pleased that they could do better than breaking even on tour or could sell a kajillion zines that no one noticed that mediocrity was creeping into every aspect of this thing we'd created. it shouldn't have surprised anyone. we laid out the formulas and made everything risk-free. no one had to think anymore, really, and anything that deviated from the norm was gently pushed to the side. with no fear of having the shit kicked out of you for having silly hair or even the fear of any but the most nominal alienation ("wow dude, cheerleaders won't date me. that's fucked up.") the tendency towards dilution is a natural one. just another merit badge to wear and a club to join but i don't think this progression is something that we all need to mourn. it was bound to happen just by thinking the way that people were thinking. immersing yourself in hardcore with the goal of making an impact on the outside world is a pretty naive one. at very best, we all have a lot more business savvy and marketable skills that the man can use. at worst, **the cult failed and we're wasting our time trying to make the remaining faithful drink the kool aid.**



LEARN TO SETTLE FOR NOTHING.



LIFE IS INTERESTING.



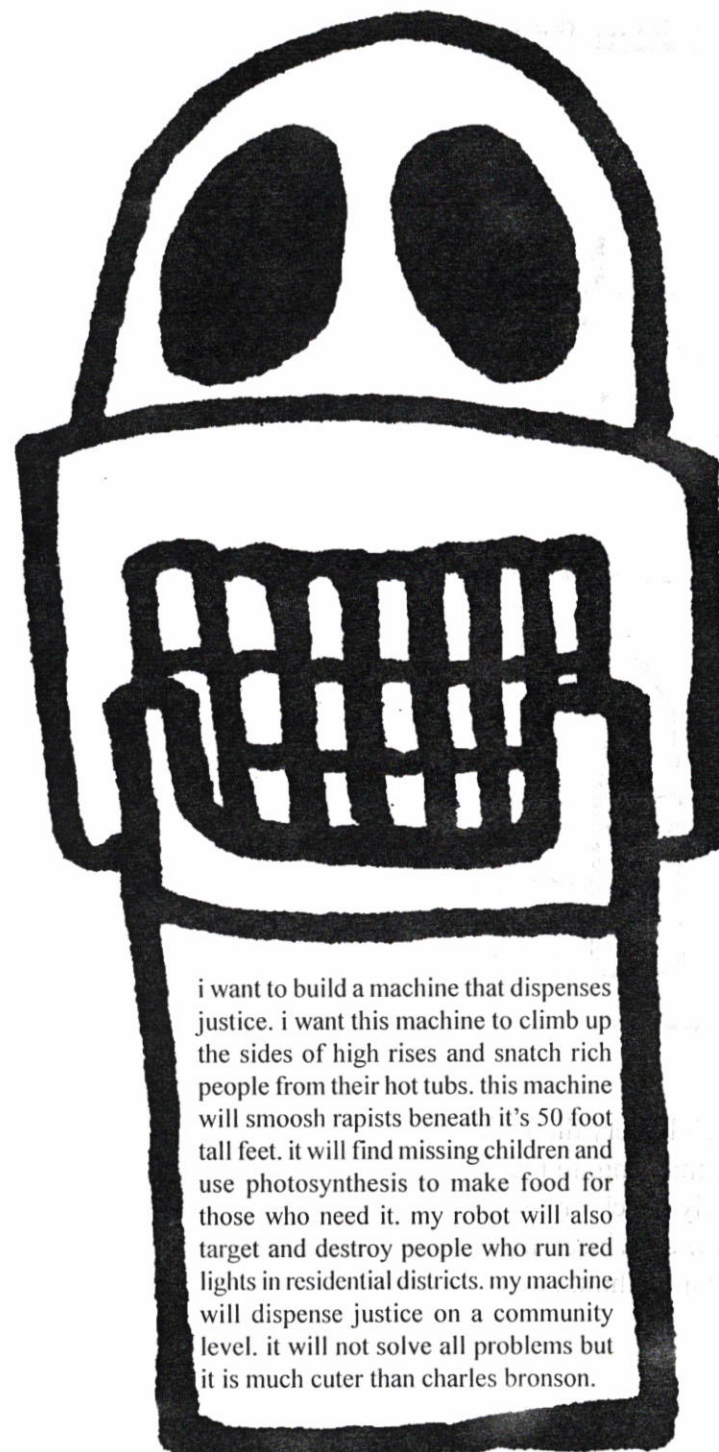
my watch battery died while i was sleeping. it conked out around 3 in the morning. in the grey hours when i should be waking up i frequently check my watch instead of the alarm clock. i had somehow convinced myself that time had frozen and that i still had lots more hours to sleep. i wish i could get that feeling back.

## thanksgiving sucks when you're an asshole.

the night before our national celebration of gluttony yoon and i got into a ridiculous (i'm definitely the ridiculous one) fight where i gave a four star demonstration of how childish i can be when constructively criticized on perfectly valid issues. in other, not so kind words, i got called out on my shit and couldn't handle it. uh, where's my pacifier. i think i have soiled my diaper. she was totally right - i do have some bad habits relating to writing. i have the tendency to edit out all the good parts of my life when i write about it to accentuate the bad, nasty shit that's so easy to prove when your life sounds like a never ending disaster. one of the really asinine side effects of this creative editing is that by scraping all the happy parts i also edit the person who means the most to me completely out of the written documentation of my life. yoon has taught me more about me, her, and the world that exists outside the shadow of my self induced stormcloud than i figured out in 26 1/2 years of muddling along on my own. aside from that completely head up my ass oversight i was also mature and cool enough to completely blow up at the mention of it. so i sat there fuming while she got uncomfortable and left. i had self absorbition to keep me busy. so i spent thanksgiving wandering around the holiday induced desolation of downtown, talking to folks who had nowhere to go for whatever reason, and drinking gas station coffee in drug dealer park. it amounted to about twelve hours of feeling sorry for myself and didn't really make me feel any better or have any constructive effect on the situation. if something goes wrong with our relationship i really am useless - completely paralyzed by whatever bad situation is happening. the next day something did get accomplished and i was thankful for something even if it was a day late and at the expense of yoon's patience. no face saved or petty insecurity vented is worth the isolation that comes from alienating someone you love. the things that are so fucking important that you feel like you have to scream them are just fucking vapors in the face of the big picture. be nice. remember how you feel about people the rest of the time.



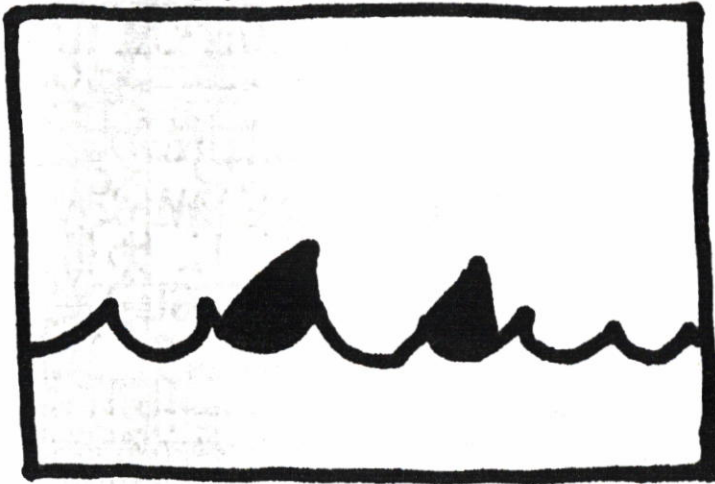
when i first moved to denver i was actually a travelling salesman. i fucking hated that job. we sold framed art prints of the most heinous variety in backwater towns. we spent countless hours hurtling through the wastelands of wyoming, utah, and nebraska to sell this garbage to unsuspecting locals. it kills me to think of how many nights i wasted trying to ignore the television in hotel rooms, wishing that i was anywhere but there. i got way too accustomed to nodding my head and smiling at people that i wasn't really listening to. i set up displays in a million different places but there were two basic types and one was much more bearable than the other. before that though, places that people go to work in every day are so similar regardless of collar color and relative level of education. all the good people of the world are stuck working in fucking factories. i hated most of the people in office buildings. i had no problems dealing with them robotically because it seemed that they were more comfortable envisioning me as some kind of vending machine instead of a person. factory workers have a different way of interacting with other people and each other. that amazes me because these people do repetitive tasks for eight or ten hours a day that would completely drive me away screaming in a matter of two hours yet they maintain their humanity and sense of humor for the most part. i spent a whole week selling pictures in an airbag plant in utah. as a side note, i bet you didn't know that airbags are propelled by rocket fuel. anyway, we loaded our crap in every day at 4am and didn't finish each day until 6pm in order to be there for every shift. doing that day after day - leaving before the sun came up and coming back to eat and go directly to sleep totally crushed me. on top of that i was selling garbage to people who could barely afford it. i was scum. i have never felt more directly responsible for exploited people and milking them for hard earned dollars then i did then. on the drive back to denver the guy who owned the picture company told me that even if he won the lottery that he would keep selling pictures. that comment stuck in my head and less than a month later i didn't sell pictures anymore.



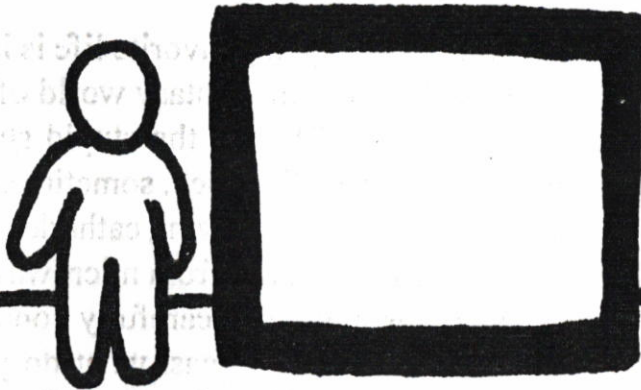
i want to build a machine that dispenses justice. i want this machine to climb up the sides of high rises and snatch rich people from their hot tubs. this machine will smoosh rapists beneath it's 50 foot tall feet. it will find missing children and use photosynthesis to make food for those who need it. my robot will also target and destroy people who run red lights in residential districts. my machine will dispense justice on a community level. it will not solve all problems but it is much cuter than charles bronson.



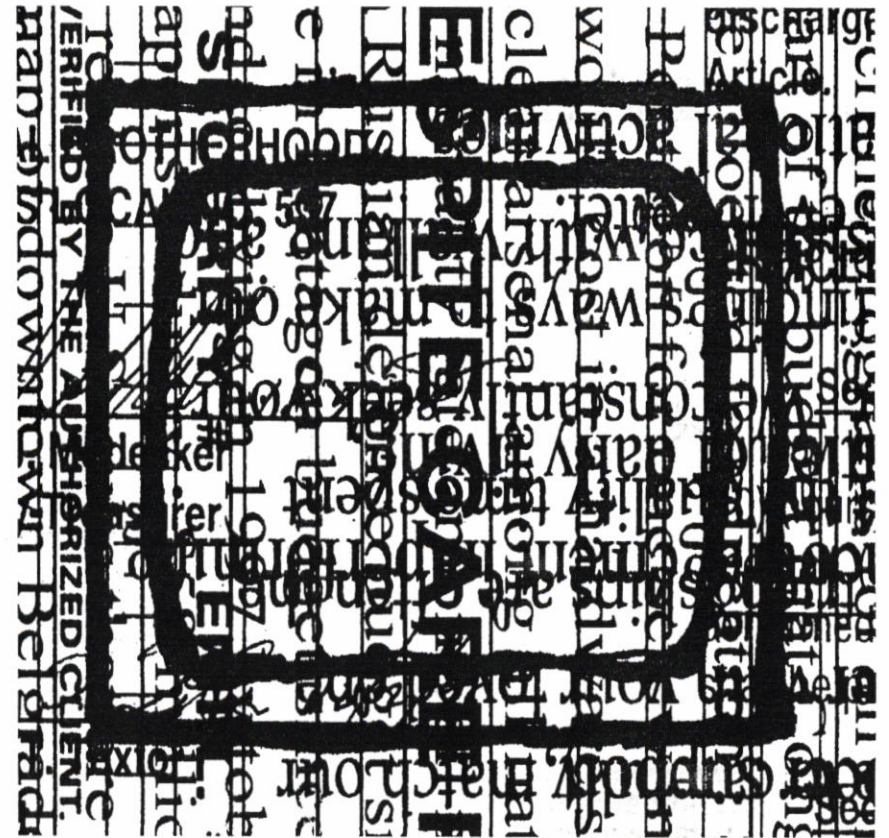
TOMORROW'S FORECAST IS GRIM.



IT WAS THE BIGGEST + MOST EXPENSIVE ONE THEY SOLD. IT TOOK THREE GUYS TO MOVE IT IN HERE.



IT'S MINE NOW BUT I STILL FEEL SO EMPTY.



kingface had it all fucked up. my favorite life is in movies. existing in nowhere but the fantasy world of somewhere else for a couple of hours. the stupid stuff just flows off my back. i am a reality duck. sometimes where i really want to be is front of a glowing cathode ray tube wiping that gross artificial butter from microwave popcorn onto my pantlegs. the oh so carefully constructed realities flash on and off my retinas. what do you expect. it's been a rough day. i buy in. times like these i wish i could erase my brain and start over.